

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A services management system can provide services to a mobile user, via a combination of network platforms. The system uses "Co-operating Intelligent Software Agent" technology in a heterogeneous agent architecture to provide enough flexibility to deal with changing network constraints, for instance as the user moves. In an example, a fixed broadband network might be used in combination with radio transmitters of a mobile network. The agent architecture, involving autonomous agents working co-operatively, forms a layered system using the underlying fixed network for inter-agent communication. In an application, a mobile user might move from a cell of the mobile network which can provide relatively wide bandwidth to one which can only provide limited bandwidth. The service management system can advise the user what services are available in either cell, at what price, based on current bandwidth usage at the two locations. If the user was already using a service which became unavailable in the new cell, the system will advise the user and, if appropriate, put the service effectively on hold until the user enters a cell in which the service is available once more.